

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/506,671
Amendment filed June 8, 2007
Reply to OA dated March 8, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

Claims 1-6 and 8-14 are currently being examined, of which claims 1-6, 8, and 10 have been amended herein and claim 14 has been newly added herein. Claim 7 has been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer as to its subject matter.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 4-6, 9/1, 9/3, 11/9/2, and 13/12/9/2 (and all claims depending therefrom) set forth allowable subject matter.

1. The Examiner has objected to claims 4-6, 9/1, 9/3, 11/9/2, and 13/12/9/2 (and all claims depending therefrom) as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The Examiner has noted that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 4, as amended, sets forth features of claims 3 and 4 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claim 4 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

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Claim 5, as amended, sets forth features of claims 3 and 5 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claim 5 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

Claim 6, as amended, sets forth features of claims 3 and 6 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claim 6 and all claims depending therefrom should be withdrawn.

Claim 14, as newly added herein, sets forth features of claims 1 and 9 in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 14 is in condition for allowance.

Regarding this objection to claims 11/9/2 and 13/12/9/2, the base claim 2 is discussed herein below. For the reasons discussed herein below, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 2, as amended, is not expressly or inherently described by Great Britain Patent 745,847 (**Folkard**). For the reasons discussed herein below, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 2, as amended, is not expressly or inherently described by USP 5,564,301 (**Kingsford**). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claims 11/9/2 and 13/12/9/2 should be withdrawn by virtue of their dependency.

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2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: Figure 7 - reference numeral "44" (page 31, line 1); and Figure 9 - reference numeral "64" (page 40, line 20).

The attached replacement sheets of drawings include changes to FIGS. 7 and 9. In FIG. 7, reference numeral 44 has been added. In FIG. 9, reference numeral 64 has been added. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

3. The abstract of disclosure is objected to because of various informalities.

The Abstract has been amended herein in a manner intended to overcome this objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to the Abstract should be withdrawn.

4. The disclosure is objected to for various informalities.

The disclosure has been amended herein in a manner intended to overcome this objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to the disclosure should be withdrawn.

5. Claim 5 is objected to because of a noted informality.

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Applicants respectfully traverse this objection, for the following reasons.

The Examiner has suggested that the word “projecting” between the words “axially” and “beyond” should be replaced with the word --projects-- in line 4. Applicants believe that a different amendment to claim 5 will better serve to enhance consistency. To further enhance consistency, the term “is” has been changed to --being-- in line 20 of claim 5. The term “projecting” has not been amended herein (line 21, claim 5).

Claim 5 has been amended herein in a manner intended to overcome this objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claim 5 should be withdrawn.

6. Claim 10 is objected to because of an informality.

The Examiner has suggested that the word “flange” between the words “other” and “member” should be replaced with the word --joint-- in line 3.

Claim 10 has been amended herein in a manner intended to overcome this objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that this objection to claim 10 should be withdrawn.

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7. Claims 1 and 7/1 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated in USP 2,726,104
(Boitnott).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, for the following reasons.

Features and aspects relating to claims 7 and 8 are described in the specification of the subject application. See, for example, page 8, lines 12 to 21.

Features of claim 7 have been incorporated into claim 1, as amended herein.

The joint of **Boitnott** is made of metal and is not brought into intimate contact over the entire surface areas.

In the Office Action dated March 8, 2007 (on page 5, at lines 9-11), the Examiner has suggested that **Boitnott** discloses “a pipe joint comprising a first 11 and a second 10 tubular joint member of synthetic resin (column 2, lines 30-31).” Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner.

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Boitnott states: "[T]he end 10b of the tubular end member 10 and the end 11b of the tubular end member 11 are adjacent to each other and are spaced apart so that there is no metal to metal contact between the end members 10 and 11 (column 2, lines 63-67)."

Tubular end member 10 and tubular end member 11 are not synthetic resin.

Boitnott fails to expressly or inherently describe the following features set forth in claim 1, as amended: "A pipe joint comprising a first and a second tubular joint member of synthetic resin," in combination with the other claimed features.

Boitnott fails to expressly or inherently describe the following features set forth in claim 1, as amended: "wherein when the pipe joint is manually tightened up, a first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially inwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially inwardly of the ridge, and a second gap greater than the first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially outwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially outwardly of the ridge," in combination with the other claimed features.

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Accordingly, in view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection of claims 1 and 7/1 should be withdrawn.

8. Claims 2, 7/2, 9/2, 10/9/2, and 12/9/2 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated Great Britain Patent 745,847 (Folkard).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, for the following reasons.

Features and aspects relating to claims 7 and 8 are described in the specification of the subject application. See, for example, page 8, lines 12 to 21.

Features of claim 7 have been incorporated into claim 2, as amended herein.

The joint of **Folkard** which is cited as a reference to reject claim 2 is not brought into intimate contact with the radially outward portion.

Folkard fails to expressly or inherently describe the following features set forth in claim 2, as amended: "wherein when the pipe joint is manually tightened up, a first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially inwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned

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radially inwardly of the ridge, and a second gap greater than the first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially outwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially outwardly of the ridge," in combination with the other claimed features.

Accordingly, in view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection of claims 2 and 7 should be withdrawn. It is submitted that this rejection of claims 9/2, 10/9/2, and 12/9/2 should be withdrawn by virtue of their dependency.

9. Claims 3 and 8/3, and 12/9/2 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated USP 5,564,301 (Kingsford).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, for the following reasons.

Features and aspects relating to claims 7 and 8 are described in the specification of the subject application. See, for example, page 8, lines 12 to 21.

Features of claim 7 have been incorporated into claim 2, as amended herein. Features of claim 8 have been incorporated into claim 3, as amended herein.

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The joint of **Kingsford** which is cited as a reference in this rejection is not brought into intimate contact with the radially outward portion.

Kingsford fails to expressly or inherently describe the following features set forth in claim 2, as amended: "wherein when the pipe joint is manually tightened up, a first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially inwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially inwardly of the ridge, and a second gap greater than the first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially outwardly of the recessed portion and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially outwardly of the ridge," in combination with the other claimed features.

Kingsford fails to expressly or inherently describe the following features set forth in claim 3, as amended: "wherein when the pipe joint is manually tightened up, a first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially inwardly of the recessed portion thereof and the portion of the abutting end face of the second joint member positioned radially inwardly of the recessed portion thereof, and a second gap greater than the first gap is present between the portion of the abutting end face of the first joint member positioned radially outwardly of the recessed portion thereof and the portion of the abutting end face of the

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second joint member positioned radially outwardly of the recessed portion thereof," in combination with the other claimed features.

Accordingly, in view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection of claim 3 should be withdrawn. It is submitted that this rejection of claims 8/3 and 12/9/2 should be withdrawn by virtue of their dependency.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, all claims currently pending are in condition for examination.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Replacement Abstract of the Disclosure
Replacement Sheets of Drawings (Figs. 7 and 9)